The Invention Claimed Is

Sub a4 1. An interactive television program guide system in which an interactive television program guide is implemented on user television equipment, comprising:

memory in the user television equipment in which program guide data is stored for use by the interactive television program guide;

means for receiving information on the amount of memory for the interactive television program guide to use to store the program guide data; and

means for adjusting the amount of memory used by the interactive television program guide to store the program guide data in response to the ~~received information~~.

2. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 1, wherein different categories of program guide data are stored in the memory, the interactive television program guide system further comprising means for reallocating the memory among the different categories of program guide data when the amount of memory used to store the program guide data is adjusted.

Sub a5 3. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 2 further comprising means for reallocating the memory based on information in a database configuration record.

4. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 3 further comprising a television distribution facility for providing the program guide data to the interactive television

program guide implemented on the user television equipment.

5. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 4 wherein the television distribution facility further comprises means for determining the memory requirements of a new non-program-guide application.

6. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 5 further comprising means for determining the amount of the memory that will be available to the interactive television program guide after the new non-program-guide application has been installed on the user television equipment.

7. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 6 further comprising means for establishing how much of the program guide data the interactive television program guide should retain for each of the different categories of program guide data to accommodate the new non-program-guide application.

8. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 7 further comprising means for downloading a new version of the database configuration record from the television distribution facility to the user television equipment.

9. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 8 further comprising means for downloading the new non-program-guide application from the television distribution facility to the user television equipment.

10. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 3 further comprising means for allocating the memory based on a plurality of storage levels contained in the database configuration record.

11. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 10 wherein each storage level specifies how much data is to be retained by the interactive television program guide in a plurality of programming categories.

12. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 11 further comprising means for using one of the programming categories as a filter to discard any program guide data that concerns programs more than a certain number of days into the future.

13. The interactive electronic television program guide system defined in claim 3 further comprising means for distributing the database configuration record to the user television equipment from a television distribution facility accompanied by the program guide data.

14. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 13 wherein the program guide data is transmitted from a television distribution facility to the user television equipment in a data stream, the interactive television program guide system further comprising means for downloading the interactive television program guide to the user television equipment in a data stream separate from the

data stream used for transmitting the program guide data.

15. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 13 further comprising means for inputting the database configuration record at a cable system headend.

16. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 3 wherein the memory comprises a nonvolatile memory portion and a volatile memory portion.

17. The interactive television program guide defined in claim 16 further comprising means for storing the database configuration record in the nonvolatile memory portion and storing the program guide data in the volatile memory portion.

18. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 3 further comprising means for including at least one default startup level in the database configuration record.

19. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 1 wherein the program guide data stored in the memory corresponds to a given television channel line-up and wherein the means for adjusting further comprises means for allocating the memory among the different categories of program guide data when the amount of stored program guide data is adjusted in response to an addition of new channels to the given television channel line-up.

20. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 1 wherein the means for adjusting further comprises means for adjusting the amount of memory used to store the program guide data to accommodate installation of a new application in the user television equipment.

Subab7 21. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 1, wherein the program guide data stored in the memory corresponds to a given television channel line-up the interactive television program guide system further comprising means for determining an amount of memory available for each of the different categories of program guide data after the addition of new channels, wherein the means for adjusting the memory adjusts based on the amounts of memory that are determined to be available.

22. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 1 wherein the program guide data stored in the memory corresponds to a given television channel line-up, the interactive television program guide system further comprising means for detecting a change in the amount of channels offered in the television channel line-up.

23. An interactive television program guide system in which an interactive television program guide is implemented on user television equipment, comprising:

memory in the user television equipment in which program guide data for a given memory configuration is stored for use by the interactive ~~television program guide;~~

means for receiving program guide data for a new memory configuration; and

means for reconfiguring the memory to accommodate the program guide data for the new memory ~~configuration.~~

24. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 23 wherein said given memory configuration further comprises a given channel line-up.

25. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 24 wherein said new memory configuration further comprises a new channel line-up.

26. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 23 wherein said program guide data further comprises program descriptions.

27. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 26 wherein said new memory configuration further comprises modified program descriptions.

28. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 23 wherein different categories of program guide data are stored in the memory, the means for reconfiguring further comprising means for reallocating the memory among the different categories of program guide data.

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29. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 28 further comprising means for

reallocating the memory based on information in a database configuration record.

30. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 29 further comprising a television distribution facility for providing the program guide data to the interactive television program guide implemented on the user television equipment.

31. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 30 wherein the television distribution facility further comprises means for determining the memory requirements of a new channel line-up.

32. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 31 further comprising means for establishing how much of the program guide data the interactive television program guide should retain for each of the different categories of program guide data to accommodate the new channel line-up.

33. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 32 further comprising means for downloading the new channel line-up from the television distribution facility to the user television equipment.

34. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 29 further comprising means for allocating the memory based on a plurality of storage levels contained in the database configuration record.

35. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 34 wherein each storage level specifies how much data is to be retained by the interactive television program guide in a plurality of programming categories.

36. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 35 further comprising means for using one of the programming categories as a filter to discard any program guide data that concerns programs more than a certain number of days into the future.

Sub a8) 37. A memory adjustment method for use in an interactive television program guide system in which an interactive television program guide is implemented on user television equipment that has memory, comprising:

storing program guide data in the memory for use by the interactive television program guide;

receiving information on the amount of memory available for the interactive television program guide to use to store the program guide data; and

adjusting the amount of memory used for storing the program guide data in response to the ~~received information.~~

38. The method defined in claim 37 further comprising reallocating the memory among different categories of program guide data.

Sub a9) 39. The method defined in claim 38 further comprising reallocating the memory based on information in a database configuration record.

40. The method defined in claim 39 further comprising distributing the program guide data from a television distribution facility to the interactive television program guide implemented on the user television equipment.

41. The method defined in claim 40 further comprising determining the memory requirements of a new non-program-guide application for installation in the user television equipment.

42. The method defined in claim 41 further comprising determining the amount of the memory that will be available to the interactive television program guide after the new non-program-guide application has been installed on the user television equipment.

43. The method defined in claim 42 further comprising establishing how much of the program guide data the interactive television program guide should retain for each of the different categories of program guide data to accommodate the new non-program-guide application in the memory.

44. The method defined in claim 43 further comprising downloading a new version of the database configuration record from the television distribution facility to the user television equipment.

45. The method defined in claim 44 further comprising downloading the new non-program-guide application from the television distribution facility to the user television equipment.

46. The method defined in claim 45 further comprising allocating the memory based on a plurality of storage levels contained in the database configuration record.

47. The method defined in claim 46 wherein allocating the memory based on the storage levels further comprises specifying how much data is to be retained by the interactive television program guide in a plurality of programming categories.

48. The method defined in claim 47 further comprising using one of the programming categories as a filter to discard any program guide data that concerns programs more than a certain number of days into the future.

49. The method defined in claim 39 further comprising distributing the database configuration record to the user television equipment from a television distribution facility accompanied by the program guide data.

50. The method defined in claim 49 further comprising:

transmitting the program guide data from a television distribution facility to the user television equipment in a data stream; and

downloading the interactive television program guide to the user television equipment in a data stream separate from the data stream used for transmitting the program guide data.

51. The method defined in claim 49 further comprising inputting the database configuration record at a cable system headend.

52. The method defined in claim 39 further comprising using memory that includes a nonvolatile memory portion and a volatile memory portion.

53. The method defined in claim 52 further comprising storing the database configuration record in the nonvolatile memory portion and storing the program guide data in the volatile memory portion.

54. The method defined in claim 39 further comprising including at least one default startup level in the database configuration record.

Subal0 55. The method defined in claim 37 further comprising detecting the addition of at least one new channel to a given television channel line-up and allocating the memory among the different categories of program guide data when the amount of memory used for stored program guide data is adjusted in response to an addition of at least one new channel to the given television channel line-up.

56. The method defined in claim 37 wherein the adjusting further comprises adjusting the memory to accommodate installation of a new application in the user television equipment.

Subal1 57. The method defined in claim 37 further comprises determining an amount of memory available for each of the different categories of program guide data

after the addition of new channels, wherein the adjusting the memory adjusts based on the amounts of memory that are determined to be available.

58. The method defined in claim 37 further comprising detecting the addition of new channels to the given television channel line-up.

Sub a[12] 59. A memory reconfiguration method for use in an interactive television program guide system in which an interactive television program guide is implemented on user television equipment that has memory in which program data for a given memory configuration is stored, comprising:

receiving program guide data for a new memory configuration; and

reconfiguring the memory to accommodate the program guide data for the new memory ~~configuration.~~

60. The method defined in claim 59 wherein the given memory configuration further comprises a given channel line-up.

61. The method defined in claim 60 wherein reconfiguring the memory configuration further comprises reconfiguring the memory configuration for a new channel line-up.

62. The method defined in claim 59 wherein the given memory configuration further comprises given programming descriptions.

63. The method defined in claim 62 wherein reconfiguring the memory configuration further comprises reconfiguring the memory configuration for modified program descriptions.

64. The method defined in claim 59, wherein different categories of program guide data are stored in the memory, reconfiguring further comprising reallocating the memory among the different categories of program guide data.

65. The method defined in claim 64 further comprising reallocating memory based on information in a database configuration record.

66. The method defined in claim 65 further comprising providing the program guide data from a television distribution facility to the interactive television program guide implemented on the user television equipment.

67. The method defined in claim 66 further comprising determining the memory requirements of a new channel line-up.

68. The method defined in claim 67 further comprising establishing how much of the program guide data the interactive television program guide should retain for each of the different categories of program guide data to accommodate the new channel line-up.

69. The method defined in claim 68 further comprising downloading the new channel line-up from the

television distribution facility to the user television equipment.

70. The method defined in claim 65 further comprising allocating the memory based on a plurality of storage levels contained in the database configuration record.

71. The method defined in claim 70 specifying wherein each storage level specifies how much data is to be retained by the interactive television program guide in a plurality of programming categories.

72. The method defined in claim 71 further comprising using one of the programming categories as a filter to discard any program guide data that concerns programs more than a certain number of days into the future.